Unsuitability of Damodar river water for human consumption

246. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:
DR. BAPU KALDATE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Damodar river water is unsuitable for human consumption and also for agricultural use according to a recent study conducted by the Central Pollution Control Board;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) what measures have been taken by Government for pollution control and for stopping violation of pollution laws by the industrial units by discharging effluents into the river; and

(d) what results achieved so far?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (d) Pollution from domestic wastes coupled with untreated industrial discharge has resulted in the heavy pollution of the Damodar river. The Government have already taken a number of steps for control of pollution in the Damodar basin:—

(i) Effluent and emission standards have been prescribed under the Environment (protection) Act, 1986;

(ii) Environment guidelines have been evolved for sitting and operation of industries;

(iii) Industries have been asked to comply with consent requirements of the State Pollution Control Boards to limit the discharge of effluents and emissions within the stipulated standards;

(iv) The Central Government, in consultation with the State Governments, have prepared an action plan to meet the effluent and emission standards for polluting industries;

(v) Fiscal incentives are provided for installation of pollution control equipment and also for the shifting of polluting industries from congested areas;

(vi) Network of ambient air quality and ambient water quality monitoring stations have been set up;

(vii) A scheme has been initiated to give assistance to cluster of small scale industrial units for setting up common effluent treatment plants;

(viii) A proposal has been prepared for including the cleaning up of the Damodar river in the second phase of the Ganga Action Plan. A commitment of the West Bengal Government for sharing 50% of the cost has also been received.

Ganga Action Plan

247. SHRI RAM DAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item published in the Hindustan Times dated, 7th November 1992 captioned "Ganga water not safe for drinking";

(b) whether any review is undertaken by the Government or the central Water Pollution control Board so far in this regard if so, with what results;

(c) what remedial measures/steps taken for completion of 261 schemes under the Ganga Action Plan for the benefit of people in Kanpur, Allahabad, taken so far; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and how much amount so far has been spent on the operation, cleaning of river under "Ganga Action Plan" indicating separately the amount spent/sanctioned by the Central Government and funds released by the major states like U.P., Bihar and West Bangal till 31.10.1992?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) There is a Monitoring Committee under the Chairmanship of Member (environment) of the Planning Commission which monitors various aspects including the aspect of water quality of the river Ganga. 27 water quality monitoring stations along the Ganga have been set up and water quality is being regularly monitored with regard to 142 peremeters. The Steering Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary (E&F) also regularly reviews the various aspects of the Ganga Action Plan. The Central Ganga Authority as the highest body for the Ganga Action Plan under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister also reviews its entire progress. Based on the review undertaken by the Government, remedial measures are taken by the Ganga Project Directorate, the State Governments and the executing agencies. With the completion of many schemes upto and including those in Kanpur and Allahabad, water quality both in Kanpur and Allahabad has shown improvement.

(d) Under Ganga Action Plan a total of 261 schemes have been sanctioned at a cost of Rs. 347.22 crores. The schemes include interception, diversion and treatment of sewage, setting up of electric crematoria, low cost sanitation and river front facilities in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. The entire cost of the programme is being borne by Government of India. So far a sum of Rs. 311.38 crores has been spent.

Pollution due to automobiles

248. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item appearing in India Today dated 15th November, 1992 "Bombay Taxis Go Green"; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take that the entire automobile industry becomes pollution free?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a)Yes, Sir.

(b) The steps taken by the Government to control vehicular pollution include.

(i) Gross and mass emission standards for all types of vehicles have been notified under the Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989;

(ii) Draft notification in respect of mass emission standards for petrol and diesel driven vehicles for the year 1995 has been issued under the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989;

(iii) Steps have been initiated to introduce compressed natural gas (CNG) as an alternative fuel for petrol and diesel in major metropolitan cities.

Environment clearance of projects

249. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several projects of Karnataka have been stalled due to the non-grant of environment clearance to these projects and if so, the details of the projects which are pending for over 3 months, 6 months, 1 year and above; and

(b) whether Government are aware that this delay is seriously affecting the industrial growth of the State and discouraging industrial enterprise?